

**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
OFFICE OF JUVENILE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

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**Report Release Date: April 8, 2015**

**Review of the Death of King Barnes**

**of Oklahoma County, Oklahoma**

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**General Information**

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) received a request for a public report regarding the death of three-month-old King Barnes. Murder in the First Degree was filed in Oklahoma County District Court on February 20, 2015, against Brandon Lamont Ross, the child's father.

**Authorization**

The following is a summary of the actions taken by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS); the dates and outcome of investigations and actions taken by the DHS; the actions taken by the district attorney; the dates and summary of judicial proceedings; and the rulings of the court, as authorized by 10A O.S. Section 1-6-105.

**Identifiers:**

Child's Name:	King Barnes
Date of Birth:	October 25, 2014
Date of Death:	February 6, 2015
Person Responsible for the Child (PRFC):	Brandon Lamont Ross

The Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY) did not become aware of this case until after the death of King Barnes.

**Death Incident**

The death report was received by the Oklahoma County OKDHS on February 6, 2015. Reportedly, Law Enforcement (LE) had responded to a child death on February 5, 2015. When LE arrived at the home, paramedics and fire department personnel were attempting to revive the child, King Barnes. The infant had been transported to a local hospital. Reportedly, the mother was not home when LE arrived. Reportedly, the father told LE that the mother had been gone from the home for several hours and he had been home with three of the children. Reportedly, the father left the home with two of

the children and left the infant home by itself. When the father returned home about twenty-thirty minutes later, he found the door to the home opened. Reportedly, when he got upstairs he found the room ransacked, but nothing was missing. He walked into the bedroom where he had left the baby sitting in a baby swing. He stated he picked up the baby, noticing the baby was limp, and not responding. He called relatives and the police. Brandon Ross was arrested for child neglect.

The OKDHS accepted this report as a Priority I Investigation. This investigation is ongoing. Reportedly, on February 9, 2015, upon further medical evaluation, King Barnes was found to have closed head trauma.

### **Prior Involvement of the PRFC with the Department of Human Services**

Two prior reports of abuse/neglect were pertinent to King's death.

#### Report to the OKDHS Alleging Abuse/Neglect (October 2, 2009) (Oklahoma County)

This report was received on October 2, 2009, and assigned as a Priority I Investigation. Brandon Ross was the biological parent of an infant. The infant was brought to a hospital due to possible shaken baby. Reportedly, the infant had blood on the brain. Allegedly, the father stated the infant had been sleeping while he showered. After his shower, he dressed the infant and found the infant "not acting right". When the infant arrived at the hospital, the infant was non-responsive. Reportedly, the father and another relative brought the infant to the hospital. The local police had been notified.

The OKDHS made a finding of Substantiated-Court Intervention Recommended as to the allegation of Abuse-Shaking by Brandon Ross, requesting immediate termination of parental rights due to the shocking and heinous nature of the abuse. The OKDHS found the infant had suffered from a subdural hematoma and bilateral retinal hemorrhaging. Mr. Ross denied inflicting any harm to the infant. Witnesses reported they had watched the father "forcefully shake" the infant on three to four separate occasions. These incidences included him throwing infant in the air, so that the infant's head would roll backward. He would also yank on the infant and would yell at the infant.

#### Felony charges filed (October 15, 2009) (Oklahoma County)

Brandon Ross was convicted of Child Abuse in 2010, receiving a twenty year sentence with sixteen years of the sentence suspended. He was sentenced to four years in prison and was released from prison on probation on July 31, 2013. On April 4, 2011, Brandon Ross relinquished his parental rights to this infant.

#### Report to the OKDHS Alleging Abuse/Neglect (October 31, 2014) (Oklahoma County)

This report was received on October 31, 2014, and was assigned as a Priority II Investigation with four days to initiate contact with the alleged victim. The reporter stated there were four children in the home with one being six-day-old King Barnes. Reportedly, there were concerns about King's father's (Brandon Ross) interactions with

one of the children. Allegedly, he was observed yelling at the child, calling the child stupid and trouble, and using the word “fuck” multiple times. However, it was reported that Brandon had been appropriate with King.

The OKDHS made a finding of Unsubstantiated as to an allegation of Abuse-Threat of Harm to the one-year-old child by Brandon Ross without interviewing Brandon Ross.